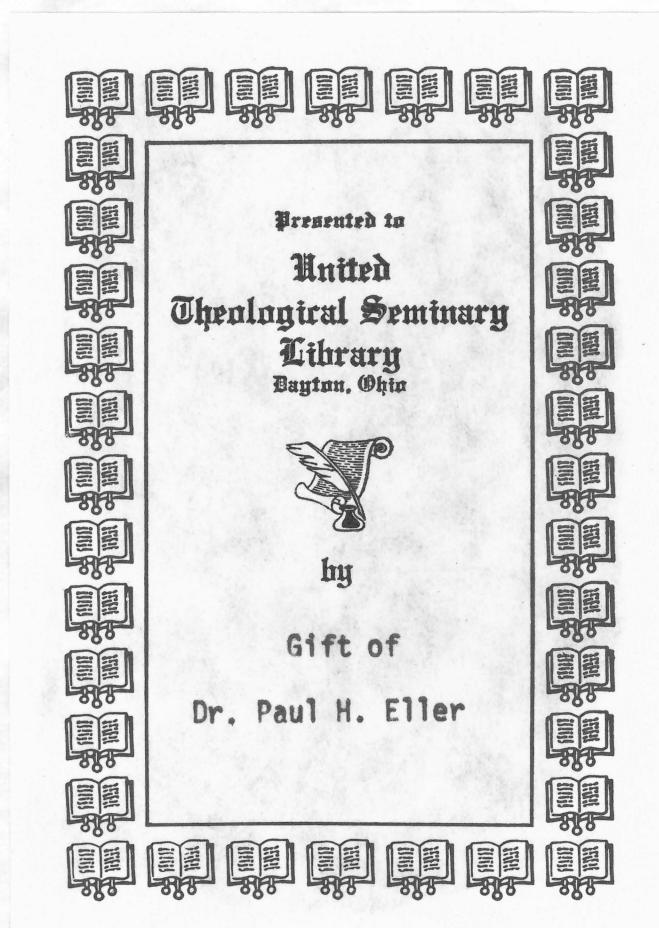


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Evangelical Church.  
Missionary Society.

On African trails with  
Evangelical adventurers

Ev.  
266.4669  
N66 058



# Adventures on African Trails

## CHAPTER I

LAGOS, 6th of June.

DEAR Dorothy, Donald, and Robert:  
You see I am going to write you a book. It is a book of travel. I have wished so many times that you could be with me because I know you would enjoy this trip, and I would enjoy it so much more if you were along, but I'll just tell you about it and we can share it in that way.

I am in Lagos where Africa meets the sea. Just landed to-day from the "Apapa." It is good to be ashore again after fifteen days at sea, and especially good to be back in Africa.

Raining to-day. Hours and hours of steady, pouring rain. The rainy season is on and of course it is too late to make a journey like this into the interior—but we can't help that.

Went to the French trading company through whom I'm getting my new motorcycle. They promised to get it off the ship and ready for the road as soon as possible. "Avec beaucoup de plaisir," they said.

JUNE 7.

Saw the bike come out of its packing case this morning. Six black boys worked all day putting it together. Just like a jig-saw puzzle. It will take a couple of days to charge the battery.

I like Lagos, but it is hot! A wet, humid heat that leaves one like a rag by noon.

Visited the mission book shop to buy a map. The only road map they had of Nigeria cost five dollars! Decided I would just have to follow my nose.

JUNE 8.

The bike is finished and looks pretty nice standing there all sleek and shiny and ready to go.

You should have seen the boys' eyes shine when they finally stood back, the starter was kicked and the engine burst into a roar. They felt that they had made it all by themselves.

Have had it out a couple of times and it sounds great when opened up. That six-horse-power motor is alive!

JUNE 9.

Spent a quiet Sunday. All packed up now and ready to start in the morning.

JUNE 10.

Rain! Rain! Rain! No chance of starting to-day, that is sure.

Later: It stopped at

**The unusual account of a first-hand adventure of one of our missionaries in traveling to his station of service**

By IRA E. McBRIDE

noon so I went and packed everything on the bike, and then it began raining again!

JUNE 11.

HERE we go!

I felt quite thrilled to leave the Coast and really to start on the thousand-mile journey into Africa. Crossed the bridge over the lagoon (Lagos is on an island), passed the fish market where hundreds of Africans were gathered, and headed north.

There has been a fine oiled road all the way here. Passed many motor trucks—all driven by Africans, carrying passengers and baggage. The drivers seem very courteous and the passengers all wave and shout greetings.

The road is shut in on each side by the walls of the forest. This is mostly swamp country,—so thick you could hardly go a yard into it.

I had not gone far before I saw a large black snake crossing the road ahead of me. There was no time to stop, and as I shot by at

one side he jerked up his shiny black head to strike.

Before long I saw two more smaller ones. That took away all my desire to go into the jungle. But it is very beautiful, piled thick with vines that seem to have buried the oil palms and smaller trees until only the forest giants rise above them.

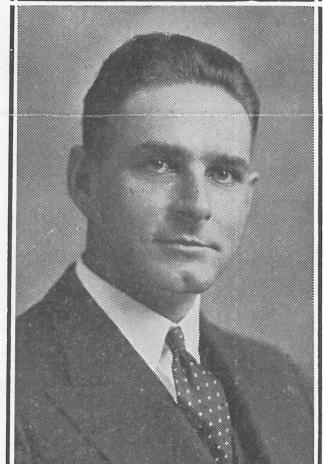
It was at Abeokuta that Bishop Samuel Crowther was captured in a slave raid when a small boy. It is a large town with forest-covered hills rising on each side. The people were of the Yoruba tribe.

I AM writing this by the side of the road, while I rest. Have had lunch of bread and minced tongue and a tin of pork and beans.

The jungle here rises like a wall for a hundred feet on each side of the road. Scores of birds whistling in the tree tops,—otherwise perfect stillness. Natives pass by and smile greetings. One woman with a baby on her back, stopped and pointed at the empty bean tin. When she got it she passed on up the road, laughing, and saying what an excellent tin it was.

Two little pickaninnies showed up just now around the bend of the road. I motioned for them to come on, but they ran away like frightened deer. They must have thought I was a slave-raider.

At one place this morning, in dense for-



Superintendent Ira E. McBride

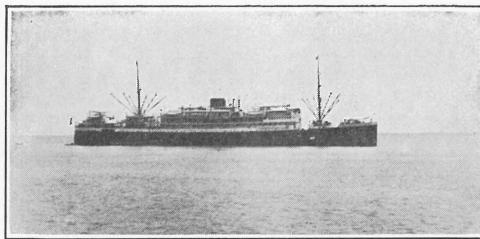


Lagos—where Africa meets the sea

est, a native policeman in full uniform stopped me. He said, "Good mornin', sah." I said, "Good morning," and then asked, "What is the matter?" He said, "Nothing the matter, sah. I want to salute you because you are an officer." So we gravely saluted and I rode on. I sure thought I was pinched that time.

4 P. M. IBADAN

Have just passed through a most wonderful forest. I have never seen anything quite like it before,—so dense and high. Thick jungle below, then the heads of the oil palms struggling through, then taller trees hung with masses of vines and creepers, and finally above all, thousands of forest giants, rising clean and white without a branch for a hundred feet and more and often meeting overhead far above the road. One thought of those beautiful cathedrals in



*The good ship "Apapa"*

England and the poet who wrote: "The trees were God's first temples."

Ibadan is one of the largest cities in Africa, the largest, I believe, outside Egypt. You just can't imagine the picture of the thousands of laughing, chattering Africans that fill its streets.

Oyo

Spent the night here in a government rest-house. I was very tired. One hun-

dred forty-five miles from Lagos and the roads for the last few hours have been very rough. But out comes the cooking outfit and soon I had a cup of hot tea. The outfit consists of a small frying pan whose handle hinges over and locks on a plate for cover. Inside is a small kettle and cover and a cup,—all of aluminum. A knife, fork, and spoon and can-opener and what more do you want? A small suitcase strapped on the carrier behind is filled with tins of food. Another suitcase has a change of clothes and my bed. That bed,—you ought to see it. It is a rubber mattress which I blow up with air. A separate part at one end blows up for a pillow. Like this: Twenty blows for the bed and five more for the pillow. With mosquito net and a couple of blankets it makes as comfortable a bed as I ever slept on. And I slept soundly until morning.

(Continued on page 3.)

## An Awakening Continent

AFRICA, a small world of itself, is a continent of contrasts. Drenching rains and burning sands, verdant forests and barren desert, fabulous wealth and stark poverty, glorious freedom and grinding servitude, new enlightenment and ancient ignorance, priceless progress and bitter defeat, spiritual victory and moral despair,—these are Africa, the heart-ache of to-day and the challenge for to-morrow.

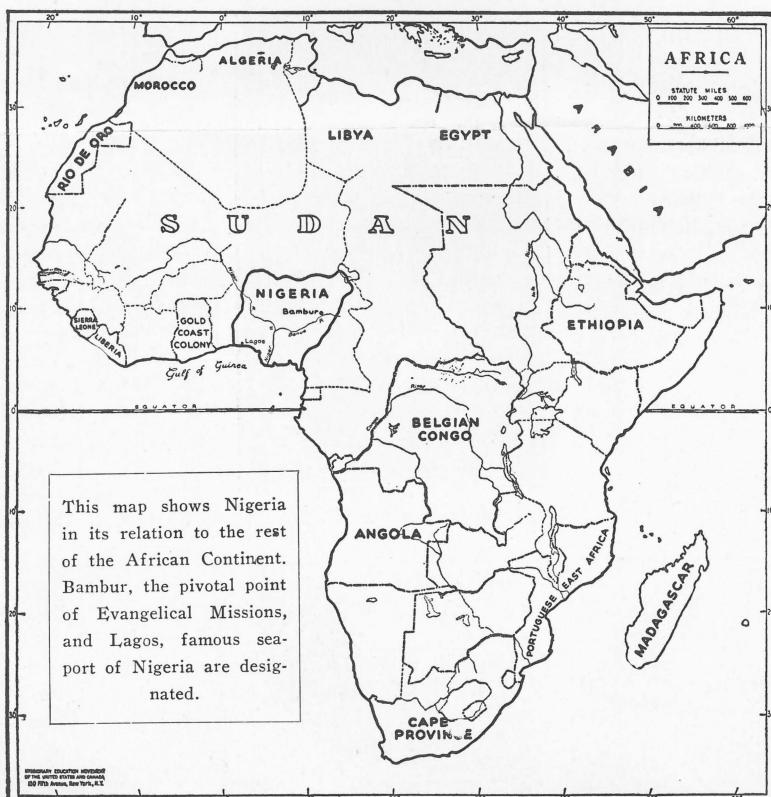
### Vast Is the Word

One of the first ways to discover Africa is to understand the geographical immensity of this continent which uses the equator for its axis. Perhaps this can best be accomplished by comparing its size with that of some other areas of our world more familiar to us. To learn that Africa, including the Island of Madagascar, covers an area of 11,800,000 square miles, is to most of us somewhat startling. But to compare this continental expanse with other areas of our modern world is to discover its vastness. Think of Europe with an area of 3,700,000 square miles, of India with 1,700,000 square miles, of China with 1,500,000 square miles, of the United States with 3,100,000 square miles, of Ireland, Scotland and Wales with a combined area of 70,000 square miles. Gather these all together and they can be easily contained within the boundaries of the African Continent. Then take Porto Rico and the Philippine Islands and let them occupy Madagascar and there is yet room enough to include another China proper and the states of Massachusetts and Connecticut for good meas-

ure. The word to describe physical Africa is *vast*.

### The African Census

Estimates of the total population of Africa vary somewhat, but according to the most reliable figures the number of humans on this continent is approximately 150,500,000.



The native speech is a babel of more than 800 languages and dialects, of which about 600 have been reduced to written form. The religious allegiances of the population are expressed in the following figures:

Protestants .....	3,000,000
Roman Catholics .....	3,000,000
Eastern Catholics .....	6,000,000
Jews .....	500,000
Mohammedans .....	55,000,000
Others (Pagans) .....	83,000,000

### The African Checkerboard

A further important consideration toward an understanding of the problem of modern Africa is the fact that of a total area of 11,800,000 square miles, less than 500,000 square miles, represented by Egypt and Liberia, are independent territory. These two

countries contain about one-tenth of the total population. The remainder of the continent is divided among six European nations. Whatever the explanation for this condition may be, it is bound to constitute a vexing problem in the life of this awakening people in the years ahead.

### A Call for Christ

Donald Fraser, the author of "The New Africa," describes the need of Africa in these words: "There was a time when Africa made its greatest appeal to romance, enterprise and endurance. To-day its appeal is for brave and clear thinking, and for courageous service that will carry out the Christian ideal all the way through the social and political maze, believing that Christ is the true guide. For this generation is faced with new and baffling situations which the contact of widely

different civilizations and races has created. A people who easily took their place as masters and leaders, find that the pupils are passing out of the simpler stage of childhood into adolescence and are claiming the privileges of manhood. Every contact of trade and government has shaken the foundations of the old systems, and cracks are appearing all over the ancient edifice. . . . What forms is the new construction to take?"

# Adventures on African Trails

## CHAPTER II

JUNE 12.

### BREAKFAST stop:

The country is hilly here,—not so much jungle but forests of oil palm trees. The road often gives fine views out over the hills and valleys. It is great to ride along through such country as this, in the early morning and especially now in the rainy season when it is all so fresh and green.

#### Noon stop:

Have been passing through very pretty country. The road winds over rolling hills and often there are views out for miles. Stopped at a village market and for half a penny, filled my pockets with oranges, bananas and mangoes.

Visited the Baptist mission at Ogbomosho. They are Americans, all Southerners—and gave me a most hearty welcome. It is a fine station, fifty years old and with hospital, schools, and college. Seven churches in the town.

#### Evening:

It was a hot day and I got badly sunburned. From Ogbomosho I went about 40 miles east to Ilorin. It is a city of 70,000 Yorubas. They must be a very large tribe, between two and three million, so I am told. I passed the house of the Emir or King, but all one can see is a fine stone wall about 15 feet high and probably a quarter of a mile around. I also saw the railway again here—but our ways soon part again. I had a hard time finding the way out of town,—it is always easier to get in than out. Asked several people who could speak Hausa, and all pointed me out on a road to the northwest as the road to Jebba. For a while it led west and I felt it was not the right road and learned later that it was not. Finally I asked again at a village. No one could talk Hausa here. Or English either. Only Yoruba which sounds like Chinese to me. So we talked sign language and drew lines on the ground, and they showed how the road would lead past two more villages and then the right-hand fork would take me to Jebba. Another half hour and there was

the fork in the road all right and leading north. It was only a track. But after two hours on it, it swung back to the east again and on to a good road, and there at last was a signboard in good English, saying, "Jebba, 15 miles." It looked good to me. It is not nice to go on for miles and miles and not know where you are headed for. Not many people here; one can go miles without a sign of a village—just the winding road and trees and more trees.

At last an opening in the hills and a broad valley ahead and there far below was the great Niger River.

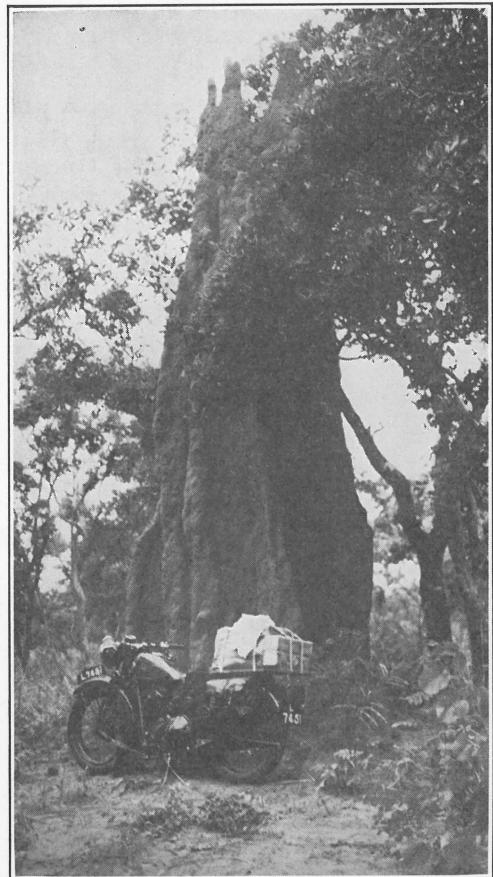
Came down into Jebba and turned off to the mission station. We stayed here for a week, twelve years ago when we first came to Africa. The mission is of the Mennonite Church from the United States and Canada. Mr. Findley who was in charge, died a year later of yellow fever. Mrs. Findley is still here. All the folk here are fine people. I have happy memories of Jebba.

JUNE 13.

CROSSED the Niger River early this morning on the big railway bridge. At the south end of it is a Niger Company store, where I filled up the bike with gas and got a couple of one-gallon tins to tie on behind. This is the last store or filling station I will see for 500 miles.

And this is the last I will see of the main line of the railway, as my road leaves it and heads more to the east. I had really expected to have to put the bike on a train at Jebba, as the roads beyond are not supposed to be open in the rainy season, but there has been no rain for a week so have decided to go on and chance it. Huge groves of bananas along here, growing under oil palms. Very pretty. A couple of big red monkeys dash across the road, one carrying a baby.

The ant hills are very striking along here. They are bright red in color as the soil is red clay. Many are quite tall and must have taken years to build. Took a picture



Ant hills, taking years to build, sometimes grow to be 25 feet tall. This picture also shows Superintendent McBride's motorcycle with which he made his trek

of one which must have been 25 feet tall.

And now a hundred miles straight east through the woods, only seeing a village once in a while. This is the Nupe tribe,—there are 200,000 of them but they have been scattered by wars and slave raids. Once a proud tribe but now broken by Mohammedans. Crossed the Kaduna River on a ferry boat, two pontoons with a platform of planks built over them. Charged me four shillings,—a dollar. But I couldn't ford it, the river is about a quarter of a mile wide, and often dangerous in high water.

A famous old city, Bida, capital of the Nupe tribe. It was captured about 150 years ago by Mohammedan slave raiders from the north. The old town wall, nine miles around, is still clearly seen. Bida is famous for its brass workings. If you have any brass bowls or traps from Africa look on the bottom and see if they don't have the word BIDA punched in. Three white men live here. I called on all of them. The government officer and public works men both said the road was open to Abuja, another 100 miles. Beyond that it was doubtful.

I spent the night with the other man, Mr. Alvery of the Church of England Mission. He is very fat and jolly. He has been out here over 40 years. When we first came out here with Mr. Guinter we traveled down the Niger from Jebba to Lokoja and spent a week there with this same man, while waiting for a boat up the Benue. He was pleased that I remembered the name of his pet baboon. It was Sarah! How could I forget that!

(Continued on page 6.)



"One always wonders what's around the bend"

# Breaking a Gospel Trail

## Simple Ways

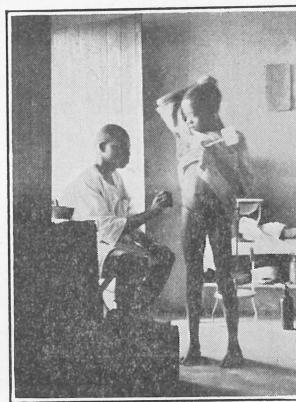
Farming has provided a primary means of livelihood for most of the native folk, with a common hoe of various types practically the sole implement of cultivation. The houses of the people in the Northern Provinces are usually constructed of mud walls with grass thatched roofs. Since the "summer" months are the rainy season, it is necessary to build the houses during the "winter" months from October to April in order that the mud walls may have opportunity to dry before the heavy rains drench the land.

## Religions

Religiously, the inhabitants of Nigeria may be grouped as:

Animistic Pagan	55%
Mohammedan	39%
Christian	6%

The larger portion of these Christian adherents is found in the Southern Provinces, where the balance of the population is mostly pagan. This paganism centers in (a) the worship of a Supreme Being or God who is known in all of the tribes, (b) the worship of demons or spirits, and (c) the worship of ancestors. Here as in other non-Christian lands, the worship of spirits and ancestors is an important part of the religion of the people and lays a relentless demand upon these who sit in the darkness of superstition and fear of the unseen.



Janga, first convert, giving injection

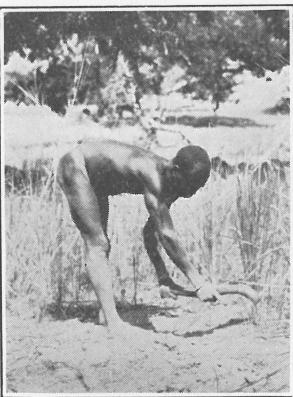
The major strength of the Mohammedan faith is found in the Northern Provinces, where it exercises a strong influence upon the life and customs of the people. Recent information from the Sudan Mission area has brought word of an increased activity on the part of Islam in its effort to bring all of the population of the Northern Provinces under its sway and power. Nigeria, weighed down with the moral despair of Animistic Paganism and the spiritual impotence of Mohammedanism, desperately needs the liberating and lifting power of the Christian Evangel.

## The Gospel Trail

While the beginnings of the Christian Mission in the Southern Provinces run back almost a century, the evangelization of the Northern Provinces is for the most part of comparatively recent origin. All but one of the more than seventy mission stations serving this area today have been established since 1900. One of these groups which has done heroic service in spite of tremendous difficulties is the Sudan United Mission, an interdenominational agency which planted its first station in the upper Benue Valley in the year 1904 and continues an enlarged work today.



Native Christian Conference at Bamburi



Farmer plowing with hoe

**I**N A part of the African Continent unknown to the adventurous footsteps of David Livingstone lies a territory of increasing interest to world-minded Evangelicals. Touching the western coast of Africa along the Gulf of Guinea, it stretches northward until it reaches the border of the Great Desert. Commonly called Nigeria, it is officially the Colony and Protectorate of Nigeria, a part of the far-flung British Empire lying wholly within the tropics.

## The Land

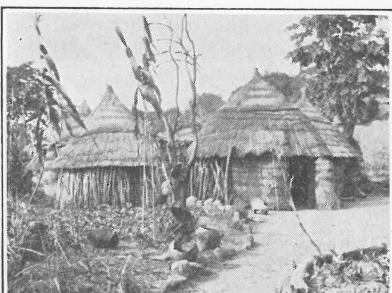
Although Nigeria appears on the map as a relatively small part of the vast African Continent, its area is actually three times as large as that of the British Isles, and while it does not boast the glittering and almost unbelievable wealth of some other sections of the Continent, it is nevertheless an important part of the total picture of present-day Africa. Like Egypt, it is favored with the presence of a great river, in fact, two great rivers, the Niger and the Benue, which join their waters about 300 miles from the coast to travel together to the sea as the River Niger. These waters, carrying a large amount of soil with them, have formed a huge delta which projects itself out into the Gulf of Guinea. For purposes of government and administration the land is divided into twenty-four provinces grouped into two major political divisions known as the Southern Provinces and the Northern Provinces.

## The People

It may be surprising to learn that a population of almost 19,000,000 ranks Nigeria as the second largest governmental unit of the British Empire overseas. Only India surpasses it in the number of subjects under the British flag. This population is divided among about 250 different tribes, ranging in size from one of four million members to some with as few as several thousand. The Ibo in the Southern Provinces with 4,000,000 members and the Hausa in the Northern Provinces with more than 3,000,000 members are the largest tribes. Many of the smaller groups are believed to be the remnants of larger tribes divided and decimated by the slave trading and tribal wars of other years. This may account for the large number of languages among these peoples, an official report some years ago indicating no less than forty-one different tongues in one province alone. The hindrance which such a situation constitutes for the messenger of the Gospel is quite evident.

## The Family

The people of Nigeria live for the most part in small towns and villages. The social unit consists of what someone has called the "extended family" under the leadership or control "of the oldest man of the oldest generation." To this family belong all of the "near relatives" of the head of the clan, including even the slaves,—everyone except the wives! The life of the people is for the most part very primitive and marked by great need, a need which is both physical and spiritual.



Huts of Wurkum tribe

# Trail in West Africa

## Evangelicals Enlist

The challenging story of Evangelical Missions in Africa really has its beginning back in the year 1906 when Rev. and Mrs. C. W. Guinter of Pennsylvania heard the pleading of heavy-hearted Africa for release from the grip of darkness. The Evangelical Church having no missionary work on the African Continent, they answered the call of the Sudan United Mission for service in Northern Nigeria. For almost two decades they carried on an heroic ministry of physical and spiritual healing in the name of the Master, supported by missionary-minded Evangelicals and friends of their own Conference area. Then in the year 1924, with the aid of Rev. and Mrs. Ira E. McBride, who had enlisted for service in Nigeria the previous year, they proceeded to establish a new station at Bambur, in Muri Province, in what is known as the Wurkum District.



*Ndule, a convert at Bambur*

1929. Permission to establish an additional center for missionary operations at Bambuka, a promising and strategic point of contact lying about thirty miles to the northeast of Bambur, was granted to our Mission by the British Government in the year 1936. The challenge of the task in Nigeria is tremendous and nowhere is it more compelling than in the area of our missionary operations where more than 50,000 humans wait for the redemptive ministry of Evangelical messengers of the Cross.

### Hindrances

The work of the Christian missionary in this area is confronted with many difficulties, both physical and spiritual, which must be conquered in the onward march of the Kingdom. The extremely unfavorable climate has always been a serious obstacle, taking its



*Pero—Pero, Bambur and Kerum Christians*

heavy toll from those who defy its hazards. Careful preparation and precautions to protect the health of the missionaries are provided. Frequent furloughs and improved living quarters help to ward off the dread consequences of tropical diseases. Nevertheless the tropical climate remains a bitter enemy that asks no quarter

and gives none. Sickness and suffering lay their weary burden upon the African also, touching all of life with heavy fingers which slow the mind as well as the body.

Illiteracy is another great barrier to Gospel progress, more than 95% of the population of Northern Nigeria belonging in this group. Evil habits and customs of long standing cling tenaciously to the influence which they have possessed over the lives of the people through many years. Low moral concepts blur the idea of a better life.

Mohammedanism, with its large body of adherents scattered almost everywhere among the tribes of the Northern Provinces, constitutes a powerful challenge to the Christian program. With all of its moral and spiritual inadequacy, it has imbedded itself deeply into the life of these people and continues to press its claims with energy in every place.

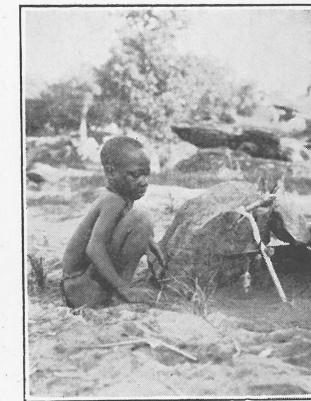
### Progress

In spite of the many obstacles in the path of the Gospel message, the record of progress in the area of our Sudan Mission is most heartening. Slowly and carefully the foundation for the building of the Kingdom has been laid by hands that have known but one purpose and One Name. Preaching, teaching and healing have been the heart of this program of redemption through the years and continue to be so today. A simple but effective organization has been established to embrace the various activities of the Mission and encourage the development of native Christian leadership as rapidly as possible. There are at present two organized churches, one at Bambur, the other at Pero. Also Sunday schools, catechetical classes, women's meetings, Bible classes for candidates for church membership, boys' and girls' day schools and large classes of candidates for the rite of baptism composed of those who have made a confession of faith in Jesus Christ.

While there is much cause for encouragement in these achievements, our greatest hope lies in the future.

### Promise for Tomorrow

Never before has there been such promise of a rich harvest as at the present time, according to the word that comes from the field in recent days. Here are an Evangelical missionary's own words of hope and faith: "A great change is coming in Wurkum Land. All of us believe that it is near. It is the change of many of the people of our area from Paganism to Christ. This year we have seen scores, if not hundreds of young men leave off pagan worship. Even the older men say they have lost faith in it. There is a new spirit of enquiry in the district. Around each of our stations there are large numbers of folk who have heard the Word and are definitely facing decisions for Christ. We have never known it so easy to talk to people about Christ. Several have accepted Him, many more seem near a decision. We believe that a large harvest is near!" A Gospel trail has been made into the heart of Nigeria by Evangelical heralds of the Cross. The light has shined in the darkness and dawn is breaking in Wurkum Land!



*Boy setting trap for wildcat*



*Pero missionary dwelling*

# Adventures on African Trails

(Continued from page 3.)

## CHAPTER III

JUNE 14.

LEFT Bida behind and purred over the hill, headed East. The bike surely runs fine. I am not sure if it is proper to speak of six horses purring, but anyway it is very comforting to hear that steady purr beneath me and to feel its power.

Crossed another river. There was a bridge, but won't be long. A sign up says it is unsafe and crossing it at one's own risk. Each span is sway-backed like a hammock and going over it is like riding a roller-coaster.

A forced stop. Rained in. A big blue black cloud came up from the East and suddenly let down rain in sheets. Just had time to duck into a home by the road in a grove of palm and mango trees. A woman dodged into a hut, but there was no answer to my call, and the rain was coming down so I parked under a lean-to shed which seemed to be the kitchen. A young chap who could talk Hausa came along and joined me, and I got him to assure the old woman in their own language that I had not come to eat her. But she never came out.

Came to a fork in the road near a village. Got a man to come out and direct me on the right one for Abuja, in Hausa of course. Then I said, "Now my friend are there any more forks in this road? If any which one do I take?" "There are no more forks in it," he said, "only straight road to Abuja." I thanked him and started on. And there within a distance of two blocks was another fork. No way whatever of telling which way to go. I looked back and there was this chap still standing by the road. Oh Africa!

Rained in again, a heavy rain with thunder and lightning, and the nice road has become soft and slippery. Reached Abuja by noon. It is high up in beautiful forest-covered hills. One white man lives here, the government officer. He said the road to Jos was closed; he had closed it the day before as several bridges were out. But he would let me try it if I wanted to since I had only a motor cycle. He sold me two gallons of gas and wished me luck. That with a couple of extra gallon tins that I'm carrying must get me through. There is no more on the road.

Rained in again. I saw it coming and got here to a rest camp and had lunch. Then

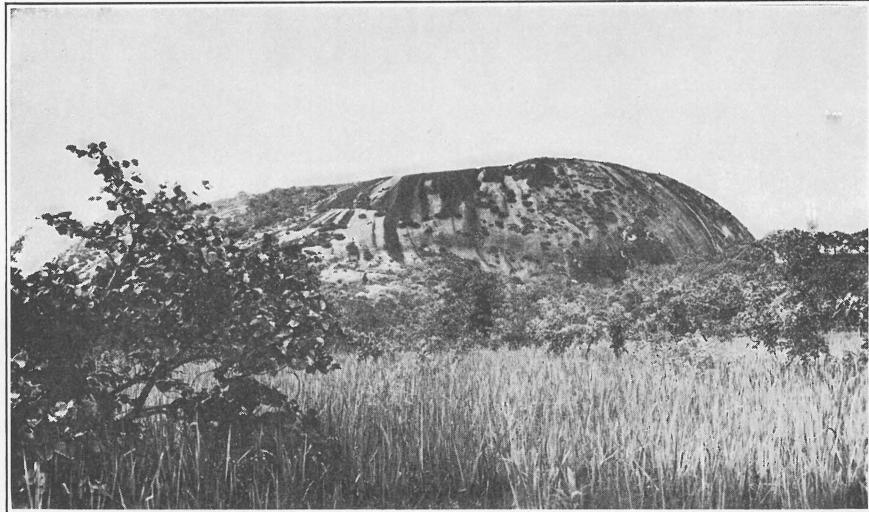


Dorothy, Donald and Robert McBride, the children of Superintendent McBride, for whom this letter-diary of his thousand-mile motor cycle journey was written\*

night like day and African sounds,—the beating of a drum off somewhere, a "Bongsong" bird in a big mango tree in the yard whistling the notes of the scale, going from bottom to top and then down again. And the frogs,—not the croaking kind but those that tinkle like little bells. Who would not love Africa at night?

JUNE 15.

Was on the road before daylight. There was only a track through dew-soaked grass



"Solid rock, curved and black and shiny"

blew up my bed and rested for an hour until the rain was over.

Did fifty more miles on slippery roads. The fine road has become only a track, overgrown with bushes and high grass. Not many people to be seen. There are miles of bush before one sees a clearing with a small cluster of huts and a few farms around it. And it is all mountainous country and very rocky. There are a lot of peculiar looking hills—they look like half of an egg-plant, of one solid rock, curved and black and shiny. Often there is not a patch of grass or a bush on them, some have a few spots of grass holding on for dear life.

Was delayed in crossing a bad stream and the sun went down so I had to call it a day.

Stopped at a rest camp near a village called Kagherko. Is of the Koro tribe. The camp caretaker was very good about building me a fire, heating water for tea and helping me make my bed. He watched while I poached three eggs for supper and said wisely "Kwoin kaya maganin Baturi ne." (Hens' eggs are the white man's medicine.)

About nine o'clock a native hunter came in, bringing my bag containing papers, goggles, etc. I had left it back at the last stream when I got off to clear the rocks out of the path. You can be sure his honesty was rewarded.

It is a glorious African night. A full moon making

and bushes, so that I got a cold early morning bath. Dozens of wild guineas and bush fowl offering to run me a race. A little gray antelope standing with up-pricked ears. And a herd of baboons leaning out from the vines of a near-by patch of jungle and barking at me.

But no people. The country seems a wilderness. Later I learned that sleeping sickness has wiped out large numbers through here. The country is very hilly and between every ridge is a stream, usually in a deep gully filled with jungle. In here are tsetse flies which carry sleeping sickness. The doctor at Vom says that it is spread over three or four hundred miles of country here and that more than half of the people have it now. Couldn't get out fast enough,—the tsetse flies were awful and each bite is like the jab of a needle.

A few more miles and it looked like the end of the road. At the bottom of the deep gorge there was a straight drop-off into a deep stream. It had been bridged by heavy logs which had been washed out. Only a bird could cross there now. I sat down and thought of all the miles between there and Lagos. And of the 200 left still between there and Jos. I couldn't go on and I wouldn't go back. And I just asked the Lord somehow to get me over that chasm. And there came a man. Just one man. And he could even talk Hausa. After we discussed the problem a while he said "Warakila"—(that is, maybe) "you could cross on the edge of the rocks." He led me away up stream through the jungle and there showed me where a ledge of rock lay right across the gully like a dam, making a waterfall. He cleared away some of the bushes and rocks and I brought the bike. We brought it down the slope foot by foot with the brakes set and with this man pulling back behind. Then I started the engine and rode right across on the rock where the water poured over, and gave it the gun to go up the other side. It was a very steep slope, about fifty feet high and it was either go up or fall back, but the six horses snorted and we went up on a run. I gave the man his reward and he said a very fervent "Thank you," and went on.

\* The McBride children are making a scrapbook of letters and pictures from their father, using the title, "On Two Wheels in Africa."

# Adventures on African Trails

## CHAPTER IV

THERE were a few more very steep slopes to climb but they seemed easy. Another fifty miles, going almost north. Then there was another town, and I stopped to ask about the road. They said it just *wasn't*. It seems that just ahead there was a large river. It is about half a block wide, full of rocks and far over one's head in depth. The bridge went out two months ago. This road is finished. Further questioning told of another way which meant going back about five miles and then taking a path to the south and east to get to the Eastern Railway where there was a road leading to Jos from another direction. It was only a path leading along the top of a mountain ridge but that way it missed all the streams and rivers which were in the valley below. The country fell away on either side in steep ridges, covered with forests and with rocky cliffs and more egg-shaped hills standing out above the trees. Twenty miles of this and I came to a little mission station tucked away in the hills. It was the first one in 250 miles. A nice lady from Virginia made me a cup of tea, but they didn't keep any gasoline as they had no use for it. Forty miles farther on I came to the end of the hills. In front was a drop of at least 2,000 feet to the valley below; 30 or 40 miles across it to the East rose the high blue wall which is the western edge of the Jos Plateau. That was the worst place I ever tried to take a motorcycle down, —very steep and all loose rocks and boulders. Then across the valley and up the wall beyond. But there was a surprise waiting for me. The river in the valley had a good bridge over it. A few miles beyond was the railway. A railway looks mighty good to one after 400 miles of wilderness. And from a little station there led the finest road I have seen in Africa, straight away to the Northeast in the direction of Jos.

I had lunch where the road crossed a lily-pond, and then opened up the bike on this beautiful road. It had never been open before because the engine was new. But I found that when it was half open I had all the speed I wanted. The trees of the forest became like a solid wall and the wind blinded me with tears. The mile post ticked by fast, 80, 79, 78, 77. The high mountain wall in front came closer and looked too steep for even a monkey to climb. In many places it is perfectly straight for hundreds of feet. Finally it was reached and the road wound up a steep canyon. It goes up between two and three thousand feet, but we did all of it in high.

The scenery here is grand. At the top the trees are left behind and there is the plateau stretching away to the East as far as you can see,—just a bare plain, covered with short grass and an occasional range of steep rocky hills sticking up through it. What interested me most was a black cloud, shutting all of the Eastern sky. It was what the English call a tornado. Stopped to pour in the last tin of gas and could hear the coming wind miles away across the plain. Ran it a good race and lost. When the rain hit there wasn't a sign of rock or bush for shelter. And was it wet!

The rain was over when I came opposite the Vom hills. Turned off the main road to the cactus hedge of Vom and reached the mission station at 4 p.m. Vom has become a very dear place to me. It was almost like coming home.

### JUNE 16.

Spent a quiet Sunday here with Dr. and Mrs. Jackson. The Barndens are on furlough.

### JUNE 17.

Found that I had to make a side trip to Bauchi to see the Government officer on mission business. Bauchi is 100 miles to the Northeast and off that edge of the plateau. There is a good road but the usual afternoon tornado caught me so that I did not get to see the Resident till 4 p.m. It was dark before I was half way back, which meant climbing up the plateau at night on a wet and slippery road. Reached Jos at 9 p.m. Lunchless, supperless and all in.

### JUNE 18.

Found that my baggage had arrived here, so spent most of the day packing it into seven headloads of 60 pounds each, to be sent through to Bambur by carriers. Spent the night at Vom.

### JUNE 19.

Left Vom on the last lap of the journey—250 miles to Bambur. Had lunch at Gindiri with Mr. and Mrs. Farrant. He is field secretary for the Sudan United Mission. Came down off the plateau at its Eastern edge, late in the afternoon and spent the night with Hoskins at Kabwir Mission.

### JUNE 20.

Left at 4:30 a.m., but met a rain at the Wase River at breakfast time. The good road ends here anyway. The rest is always bad and now will be worse. Several bridges over small streams were washed out, but there were always some planks to be found and one is enough if it is just long enough. The lumber used in bridges along here is always mahogany. It is about the only kind the white ants can't eat.

Took another tumble in the mud and then another and finally so many that I lost count. Road was like grease. Even at a crawling pace, with both feet out to catch myself, the front wheel would slip like a flash and nothing in the world could keep us from going down. I soon looked like a pig. Was afraid for my weak ankle but found other worries. The engine got hot and once it fell with my leg underneath and burned all the inside of my leg. After that nothing mattered. So when I got in some sticky gumbo mud and five men could not push me out, I just sat there from 10 o'clock in the morning until 3 in the afternoon. Then 20 men came from the next town at my request, led by their king, and picked the bike up and carried it half a mile until the gumbo was past. Spent the night at Bashar on my wind mattress and slept 10 hours straight.

### JUNE 21.

The last day. From Bashar on the road is sandy so no amount of rain could stop me. Often there was water standing for a mile at a stretch but we just plowed through it. The only real difficulty was a herd of wild Fulani cattle. They got frightened and ran down the road ahead of me and their owners could not catch them and they would not let me by. How far can a cow run? Well, believe it or not those cows ran all of 35 miles. That is the truth. Once I tried to come close and scare them out of the road, but an old longhomed black bull charged me like a mad buffalo. I just dodged and he missed me by a yard. That was enough of that. Finally they scattered into the bush and I suppose the cow people are hunting for them yet.

The Pai River was over my head in depth but several men helped carry in trunks of trees and we built a bridge. From there on the last 40 miles of road was dry and smooth and we came sailing along to Bambur at high speed. The people of the village were out in crowds and there was Armold opening the gate. It is good to be home at last!

THE END.

*"I had lunch where the road crossed a lily pond"*

## SOME GOOD BOOKS ON AFRICA

### *For Adults*

OUT OF AFRICA .....	Emory Ross
CHRIST IN THE GREAT FOREST .....	Felix Faure
THE CLASH OF COLOR .....	Basil Mathews
THE RAPE OF AFRICA .....	Lamar Middleton
THE NEW AFRICA .....	Donald Fraser
CONGO CROSSES .....	Julia Lake Kellersberger
A COURSE ON AFRICA FOR ADULTS .....	T. H. P. Sailer
God's CANDLELIGHTS .....	Mable Shaw
SONS OF AFRICA .....	Georgina A. Gollock
BLACK AND WHITE IN EAST AFRICA .....	R. C. Thurnwald
THIRSTING FOR GOD .....	E. S. Watt

### *For Young People*

CONSIDER AFRICA .....	Basil Mathews
THE LAND AND LIFE OF AFRICA .....	Margaret Wrong
AFRICA TO-DAY .....	Mary Jefferys
A COURSE ON AFRICA FOR YOUNG PEOPLE .....	Margaret Holly Tuck
THINKING WITH AFRICA .....	Milton Stauffer
THE MOFFATS .....	Ethel Daniels Hubbard
FUN AND FESTIVAL FROM AFRICA .....	Catherine Miller Balm

### *For Intermediates*

AFRICAN BRIDGE BUILDERS .....	William C. Bell
LIVINGSTONE THE PATHFINDER .....	Basil Mathews
UGANDA'S WHITE MAN OF WORK .....	Sophia Lyon Fahs
BLACK TREASURE .....	Basil Mathews
A COURSE ON AFRICA FOR INTERMEDIATES .....	Hazel Harker

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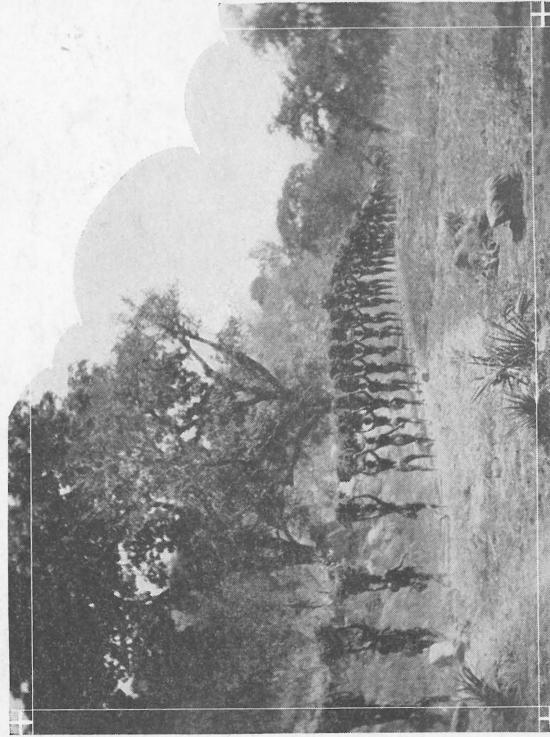
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# ON AFRICAN TRAILS

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